

Olde Hope
Antiques in
New Hope,
Pennsylvania.



BRAVE OLD WORLD

For the second installment of our annual EARTH project, ELLE DECOR explores **renewal** in design through the lens of **six antiques dealers**. Their collective commitment to celebrating history is the lesson in design stewardship we need. Their practices, as **diverse in their perspectives** as they are in their client base, prove that decorating with an eye toward **sustainability** doesn't have to look one specific way. Their stories show new ways **we can work together** to mitigate excess while cultivating a habit of care—and how we can live with what we love for generations to come.

BY CAMILLE OKHIO



NEW HOPE, PENNSYLVANIA
+ NEW YORK CITY

OLDE HOPE ANTIQUES

Patrick Bell

Patrick Bell of Olde Hope Antiques has been dealing in 18th- and early-19th-century American furniture since the 1970s. Based in Pennsylvania and New York City, Bell and business partner Edwin Hild have sourced for the likes of Jacqueline Onassis and Oprah Winfrey. The pair caught their first big break at a local auction. "Ed found this painting so covered in dirt we could barely see what it was," Bell says. Purchased for \$1 in 1977, the painting turned out to be a portrait of one of America's earliest abolitionists, Benjamin Lay. It sold to the National Portrait Gallery, and the proceeds paved the way for the duo's first storefront. Is a more auspicious beginning even possible? Bell now offers classic comb-back Windsor chairs alongside Native American baskets and pictorial hooked rugs; his sensibility is preservation-minded, though he's far from a period purist. "Old-guard collectors held onto everything from the flooring to the ceiling beams," he says. "Mixing can be so much more fun!" oldehope.com

Instagram: @oldehopeantiques



Ammi Phillips portrait, swan decoy, and dower chest, all early 19th century. LEFT: Heart stool, circa 1890–1915. BELOW: Late-18th-century child's rocking chair.



American églomisé looking glass, circa 1830–40.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: ELLEN McDERMOTT (2); CHRISTIAN GIANNELLI (2); ELLEN McDERMOTT



LONDON

1934

Abel Sloane

Early plastic and plywood are a specialty for Abel Sloane, the founder of London-based 1934—so named for the year Gerrit Rietveld released his famous crate chair. Sloane's sweet spot is interwar innovation, with a practice that encompasses interior and furniture design, sourcing, consultation, and writing. (His first book, *The Simple Heart of Plywood*, was a survey of the work of British mid-century designer Gerald Summers.) "After university I asked Retrouvius for a job," says Sloane, referring to the London-based ELLE DECOR A-List firm that specializes in salvage materials. "They gave me some 1960s cabinets to restore, and I became more interested in design and furniture, and started doing my own research." When Sloane went out on his own in 2012, he did so with the same eco-friendly sensibility, sourcing rare examples of bentwood and plastic furniture and restoring them with care, creating viable alternatives to the assembly line for today's discerning shoppers. abelsloane1934.com

@abelsloane1934



"Once you're aware of sustainable practices, they inform everything you do."

—ABEL SLOANE

RUBY WOODHOUSE



COUNTER-CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: An early Joe Colombo Universale chair; Saturn dining table by Max Clendinning; Alvar Aalto chair; Frits Schlegel for Fritz Hansen cabinet.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: KATHARINE POLE; NICK POLE; JOHN ENGELFELD; KATHARINE POLE

LONDON

KATHARINE POLE

Katharine Pole

London-based textiles dealer Katharine Pole has had a long-term love affair with fabric. "When I was a textile designer, I was very inspired by early chintzes," Pole says of the prints she designed for herself and, later, designer Alice Pollock. "I've always been interested in 18th- and 19th-century toiles and block prints—textiles that aren't aloof, if you know what I mean." Pole opened her eponymous practice specializing in French antique textiles in the 1990s, applying her aesthetic inclinations to the upholstery of armchairs and cushions alongside sourcing for an impressive library of dead-stock fabrics. Her client base, which includes interior designers Joanna Plant and Rita König (as well as the late Robert Kime), comes to her for her rich archive, some of which dates back centuries. The years may pass, but Pole's keen eye ensures that her offerings remain perfectly suited to today's tastes.

katharinepole.com

@katharinepole

HOW TO CARE FOR YE OLDE FINDS

- For cottons, silks, and wools, Katharine Pole suggests simply using **Savon de Marseille**, a traditional French soap made from olive oil and alkaline ash from marine plants of the Mediterranean.

- Patina is a good thing according to Abel Sloane (page 72), who uses **Wood Silk** to revive the depth of color in darker woods after cleaning.

- Marlon Orr (page 78) taught himself how to fix his Bauhaus wares using **Christophe Pourny** products.



COUNTERCLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Block printed quilt; French linen pillow; Pole's booth at the Decorative and Antique Textiles Fair in London;



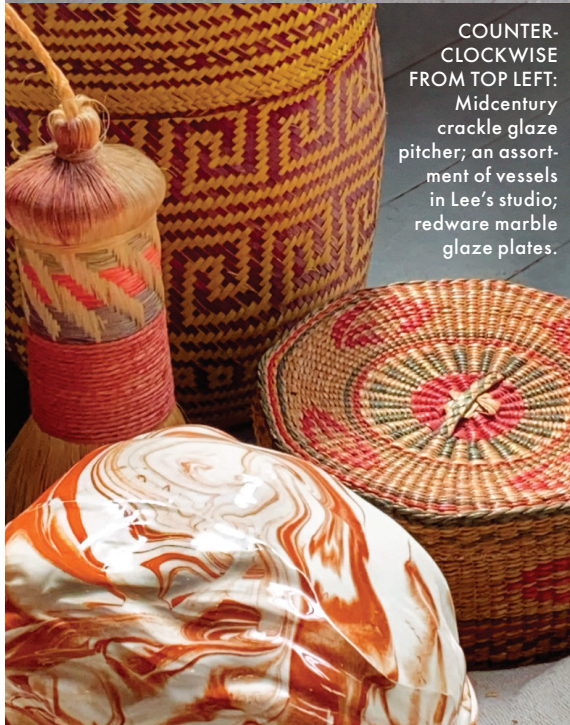
SALIDA, COLORADO

THE SPIRAL

Maia Ruth Lee

Korean artist Maia Ruth Lee creates with a regenerative ethos in mind. Lee has exhibited painting, video, and sculpture at the Whitney Museum of American Art, François Ghebaly Gallery, Jack Hanley Gallery, and the Aspen Museum of Art, communicating emotion and memory through symbols and forms that suggest baggage and an itinerant existence. "My art practice always stems from observation, research, and repurposing. I try to use the resources I have wherever I go." The same goes for the Spiral, her Instagram shop of vintage tableware and decorative objects. While she finds, researches, and offers a wide range of items—candlesticks, cutlery, plates, vases, teapots—her focus is on the handmade. "I appreciate the details," she says, which might explain why she's developed such a strong artistic following. Customers seek her out for what they can't find anywhere else or don't even know they want: objects that inspire nostalgia, like cabbage-ware soup tureens, or oddities like a ceramic handmade angel. It's about the moment of surprise when you first discover a piece, and the delight that follows when it becomes part of your home. maiaruthlee.club

Instagram @the___spiral



COUNTER-CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Midcentury crackle glaze pitcher; an assortment of vessels in Lee's studio; redware marble glaze plates.

YOUR KIDS AND YOUR ANTIQUES CAN COEXIST

Collectors and dealers like Lee and Marlon Orr (page 78) swear by the effectiveness of versions of the Montessori method when it comes to teaching toddlers about life with old things. Anything can be a toy—within reason—as long as it gets put back in its place.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: MAIA RUTH LEE; DARIO CATELLANI; MAIA RUTH LEE (2)



FROM TOP: Rare LC4 lounge chair by Le Corbusier; 1930s pottery by Maria Laach; Peter Behrens desk chair.



“Bauhaus design can withstand punishment and still look good.”

—MARLON ORR



ELLINOR STIGLE

NEW YORK CITY

OBJECTS IN GENERAL

Marlon Orr

Objects in General is antiques dealing at its most spare and rational. “I only buy and offer 35 objects per quarter,” says Marlon Orr, the gallery’s founder. “A file goes out to my clients, then they visit, and we discuss what caught their eye.” Those clients come to Orr for a story and leave with rare Bauhaus furniture, art, and ephemera out of the Bowery loft he shares with his wife, the photographer Ellinor Stigle, and their toddler, Rohe (named for Ludwig Mies van der Rohe). The German interwar movement that has so captured Orr’s attention was famous for its all-encompassing approach. “Most of my pieces came out of the buildings they were designed for,” he says. Aside from its sleek, logical design, Bauhaus furniture is valued for its hard-wearing nature—perfect for anyone with a young family. “I surprised myself once by not freaking out when I caught Rohe dragging a B25 stool from 1927 across the floor,” Orr says. “Really, the stool was teaching my son how to walk.”

Instagram @objectsingeneral



WISCASSET, MAINE

TRIFLES

Helen Robinson

Helen Robinson's curation of her Wiscasset, Maine, antiques shop, Trifles, brings new meaning to the word *irreverence*. "We specialize in anything," Robinson says playfully. "Furniture, glass, ceramics—whatever was lovingly crafted and made to stand the test of time." The unique way in which her stock is displayed and chosen is perhaps in part due to her rather nontraditional path to antiques. "My first love was always food," she says. It was her late husband, Matthew, who initially had the antiques bug. "When we moved to Maine and started a family in 1986 we opened a restaurant where everything down to the plates and tables was for sale," she says. "The idea was that we could have our children around us while sating my love of food and his love of antiques." Now, Helen's clients—the designers Bunny Williams, Michael Trapp, and Gregory Rockwell among them—return for timeless solutions to contemporary design conundrums. "Antiques are not to just be looked at and admired," Robinson says. "They are to be used."

Instagram icon @triflesmatthewhelen



Inside the gallery, miniature cabinets decorate an antique oval table. LEFT: Carved wood wing fragment, circa 1700.



THE DOS & DON'TS OF LIFE WITH ANTIQUES

- **Do identify** one unifying characteristic such as color, shape, or texture when mixing periods and styles.
- **Do your research.** "It makes things a lot more interesting if you gather information about a piece," says Abel Sloane (page 72).
- **Don't overthink it.** "If you love something and it speaks to you, then trust it will work in your environment," says Helen Robinson.

PETER FRANK EDWARDS